

A success both on and off the field

WYCOMBE Wanderers ended the 1980-81 campaign in splendid style, with victories in both of their end of season tour matches in Portugal during Whitsun week.

A spectacular overhead kick from Terry Scott 15 minutes from time gave the Blues an outstanding 2-1 win over first division Belenenses in the opening game in Lisbon last Tuesday.

Belenenses, managed by Jimmy Hagan the ex West Bromwich Albion and England inside forward, boast three Internationals and this season reached the semi-finals of the Portuguese Cup, only to be eliminated by the mighty Benfica.

Although fielding only seven regular first team players, in a game packed with plenty of skill and entertainment, they encountered a Wanderers side, not at full strength themselves, but who more than made up with grit and determination what they lacked in technical ability.

Marshalled in midfield by the experienced Holifield (later awarded "Man of the Match" by the committee) and the enthusiastic Kennedy and held firm at the back by the veteran Keith Mead and 'keeper Gary Lester, Wycombe were never overawed amid the impressive 70,000 seater stadium, the second largest in Portugal.

Wycombe started brightly, enjoying the majority of the early play, and it came as no

Wycombe Wanderers player Nick Shrimpton (right) reports on their post-season tour to Portugal last week.



surprise when they took the lead after 30 minutes. An Anton Vircaus header was adjudged to have been handled on the goal-line and Howard Kennedy, who very rarely misses from the penalty spot, made no exception to the rule.

Clearance

As the game progressed, both sides had numerous chances. Immediately after the restart, Ken Wilson put the ball inches wide with only the goalkeeper to beat, while at the other end Timmy Lee made a miraculous headed clearance off the goal-line.

However not even he could prevent the home side from grabbing a well taken equaliser midway through the second half. Wycombe were not to be outdone though and fought back to snatch a well deserved, and indeed memorable victory, 14 minutes from time when Scott added the finishing touch to a free kick move involving Vircaus and Lee.

Wycombe's second game

two days later against third division Athletico failed to live up to the high standards set in the previous match, but despite the burden of another hot Lisbon evening, Wycombe faced few problems from their fellow part-timers.

Ian Rundle, assistant player manager of the Reserves, nodded home a Ken Wilson corner after 12 minutes to put the Blues one up and Vircaus, who is proving to be something of a lethal weapon from set pieces, did likewise on the half hour.

The third and final goal of a rather lethargic and scrappy game came in the 40th minute when Steve Long slotted home a Bobby Dell high ball to put the Blues in an unassailable position at the half time whistle.

In the second half, Mark Richardson, enjoying his first team debut, failed to increase the lead after a dazzling solo run. Ken Wilson, not having one of his better games, had been replaced in the first half, but found

himself back on the field for the last quarter of an hour after Lee had collided with goalkeeper Chris Way.

By mutual consent both sets of management agreed that in accordance with the spirit of the game, since all substitutions had been made, it was only right that Wilson should return to make up the eleven.

Golf event

As well as the success on the field, the 1981 tour, perhaps more importantly proved a huge success off it. The tour party consisting of 15 players and nine officials, enjoyed an excellent week in sun-drenched Estoril, either lazing on the sandy beaches or bathing in or around the hotel swimming pool.

Estoril itself is on the western tip of the Costa Del Sol some 20 miles from the Portuguese capital Lisbon. It is renowned for its huge casino complex and picturesque golf course which is on the European championship circuit.

Not surprisingly several members of the party found it very difficult to avoid the odd flutter during their stay and a golf tournament (the Estoril Open as it became known), organised by Ken Wilson, ended with Club vice-chairman Brian Lee stealing the much desired first prize.

Players: M. Holifield, S. Long, K. Wilson, G. Lester, M. Richardson, A. Vircaus, K. Mead, I. Rundle, H. Kennedy, B. Dell, T. Lee, C. Way, N. Shrimpton, P. Bycroft.